



Request for Proposals

A Strategic Asset Evaluation & Industry Competitiveness Analysis for
Queen Anne's County Economic & Tourism Development

Proposal Submission Deadline: August 11, 2023 at 3:00 p.m.

Mail or Hand Deliver to Proposal Primary Contact:

Rebecca Clark, Economic Development Coordinator
Queen Anne's County Economic & Tourism Development
425 Piney Narrows Road, Chester, MD 21619
410-604-2100
rclark@qac.org

Advertisement

[Queen Anne's County](#) is soliciting proposals from qualified organizations to conduct a Strategic Asset Evaluation and an Industry Competitiveness Analysis to assess sites for industrial development, site visit presentation review, and industry competitiveness analysis.

Interested applicants should submit a Letter of Intent (LOI) on or before July 14, 2023 via email to Rebecca Clark at rclark@gac.org

An electronic copy of the information package may be downloaded <https://emma.maryland.gov> or www.choosequeenannes.com

Each proposal received in response to this RFP will be evaluated on the approach to analysis, methodology, capacity, experience and cost outlined in the RFP.

All proposals must be sealed, clearly marked "Queen Anne's County Strategic Asset Evaluation and Industry Competitiveness Analysis," and must include all elements described in the information package.

One electronic copy (via email, preferably pdf), one original and three hard copies must be delivered in a sealed envelope to Queen Anne's County Economic & Tourism Development, Attn: Rebecca Clark, 425 Piney Narrows Road, Chester, MD 21619 on or before August 11, 2023 at 3:00 p.m. Information and questions should be directed to Rebecca Clark at rclark@gac.org

Bid Opening will occur at 3:15 p.m. on August 11, 2023 at Piney Narrows Road, Chester, MD 21619.

I. Project Overview

A. Introduction

Queen Anne's County is soliciting proposals from qualified organizations to conduct a Strategic Asset Evaluation and an Industry Competitiveness Analysis that will provide its Economic Development Commission with a detailed understanding of the resources it can leverage to support integrated workforce and economic development initiatives, and strengthen its competitive position in the global economy. The overall goal of the project is to assess sites for industrial development, review and improve site visit presentations, and increase industry competitiveness.

The selected vendor will first conduct a Strategic Asset Evaluation that includes a high level review of several sites and key data; on-site visits; and site/community feedback and recommendations.

In the second phase of the project, the selected vendor will conduct an Industry Competitiveness Analysis to define QAC's target industries by considering the local and regional assets that would be attractive to target industries, and providing the data needed to better understand whether potential industry clusters would benefit the larger community.

The selected consulting firm should be prepared to develop business cases for best-suited industry subsectors and a highest-and-best use determination; make prioritized investment recommendations by target industry subsectors to make QAC more competitive; produce a road map for continuing forward momentum following report delivery; and to advise on the site visit presentation process.

B. Department of Economic & Tourism Development Overview

The Department of Economic & Tourism Development elevates [Queen Anne's County](#) as an economically vibrant, welcoming and diverse place for business and recreation by:

- Delivering exceptional customer service and timely, relevant resources;
- Proactively cultivating business attraction, retention and expansion;
- Developing and strengthening destination amenities;
- Promoting visitor opportunities and experiences;
- Forging intern and apprentice partnerships; and
- Skillfully managing County resources to fuel economic growth.

A valued resource, connector and catalyst, the Department strengthens Queen Anne's County's economic and community vitality, showcases the county's culture and character, and supports sustainable growth opportunities for residents, businesses, and visitors.

For more information on Queen Anne's County Economic & Tourism Development, visit www.choosequeenannes.com

C. Background

In an effort to develop a 21st century workforce and create economic development capacity in Queen Anne's County, Queen Anne's County Economic & Tourism Development sought funding from Maryland Department of Commerce to complete a Strategic Asset Evaluation and Industry Competitiveness Analysis. The initiative was awarded funding through Maryland Department of Commerce's Rural Maryland Economic Development Fund and will be overseen by Upper Shore Regional Council.

When it comes to economic development, rural communities can sometimes struggle to reach the critical mass required to attract employers and sustain economic growth. This, coupled with infrastructure challenges specific to sewer capacity in our main growth areas and a push toward directing growth to municipalities over the next ten years will require a fresh perspective on our economic development strategy. Queen Anne's County will be utilizing an asset-based economic development approach in order to attract, retain and expand business; focusing on how our county and municipalities can build on their natural and working landscapes, local institutions, existing infrastructure, historic and cultural resources, industry clusters and human capital. Central to that perspective will be a two-pronged approach that will begin with the Strategic Asset Evaluation and Industry Competitiveness Analysis. Once complete, the information from the analyses will inform the second part of the project: an updated Strategic Plan for the Economic Development Commission.

D. Letter of Intent

Interested applicants should submit a Letter of Intent (LOI) on or before July 14, 2023 via email to Rebecca Clark, Economic Development Coordinator, at rclark@qac.org

E. Request for Proposals

The contract will be awarded to the consulting firm that offers the most beneficial proposal encompassing all possible criteria established within this Request for Proposals, as well as the cost for the proposed services and timeframe needed to complete the data collection and recommendation summary. Proposals will be reviewed privately and evaluated by a panel to make the final award decision.

II. Scope of Work & Deliverables

- A. **Strategic Asset Evaluation:** The selected consulting firm will be responsible for assessing Queen Anne's County's strategic assets through the following strategies:
1. High level review of available sites and key data points;
 2. Site visit(s)

3. Evaluation and Recommendations for three to five identified sites, taking into account the information gathered on key data points and the Sage Policy Group study completed for northern Queen Anne's County.
- B. Industry Competitiveness Analysis:** The selected consulting firm will be responsible for identifying which industries and/or sites are best suited, based on key criteria for Queen Anne's County via the following strategies:
1. Industry Subsector Matchmaking;
 2. Creation of industry profiles;
 3. Screening and identification to determine if the County or identified sites could meet the minimum siting criteria for each industry profile; and
 4. Defining economic impact for industry subsectors.
- C. Study Deliverables:**
1. Business cases developed for best-suited industry subsectors;
 2. Prioritized investment recommendations by target industry that will increase Queen Anne's County's economic competitiveness; and
 3. A road map with stakeholder alignment to continue forward momentum.
- D. Public Engagement/Communication**
The selected consulting firm shall be available, as needed, to present and discuss the completion of the study with representatives of Queen Anne's County Government.
- E. Supporting Analysis**
The selected consulting firm shall also provide assistance identifying and/or analyzing appropriate funding sources for prioritized investment recommendations, and incentives designed to attract identified target industries.

III. Proposal Format, Content, and Submission Requirements

A. Submission of Proposals and Deadline

Email one PDF with all documentation to Rebecca Clark at rclark@qac.org. Applicants must also provide one original and two hard copies in one sealed, company-marked envelope and clearly labeled "Queen Anne's County Strategic Asset Evaluation and Industry Competitiveness Analysis" to Queen Anne's County Economic & Tourism Development no later than 3pm on August 11, 2023. The proposal should be addressed to:

Rebecca Clark - rclark@qac.org
Economic Development Coordinator
Queen Anne's County Economic & Tourism Development
425 Piney Narrows Road
Chester, MD 21619

Proposals received after 3:00 p.m. on August 11, 2023 will not be considered.

There is no expressed or implied obligation for Queen Anne's County to reimburse organizations for any expenses incurred in preparing proposals in response to this request. Queen Anne's County reserves the right to retain all proposals submitted and to use any ideas in a proposal regardless of whether that proposal is selected.

Submission of a proposal indicates acceptance by the organization of the conditions contained in this Request for Proposals, unless clearly and specifically noted in the proposal submitted and confirmed in the contract.

B. Equal Opportunity

All qualified persons, firms and proposers will receive consideration without regard to age, color, disability, gender, national origin, race, religion, or sexual orientation. Minority Business Enterprises (MBE), Women-Owned Enterprises (WBE), and Veteran-Owned Enterprises are encouraged to apply.

Queen Anne's County is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

C. Queen Anne's County Standard Operating Policies: Procurement Policy #400-010

It is the responsibility of the proposer to review and adhere to all of Queen Anne's County Procurement Policies, #400-010. The policies can be located at <https://www.qac.org/593/Procurement>

D. Questions about the Request for Proposals

Questions about the scope of work, requests for additional information, and/or concerns about the submission of the proposal should be directed to Rebecca Clark at rclark@qac.org by July 24, 2023. Questions via telephone or other methods will not receive responses, as email provides the best opportunity for tracking and accountability. Questions and answers will be posted in the form of an Addendum to the original post on <https://emma.maryland.gov> and www.choosequeenannes.org on July 28, 2023.

E. Minimum Proposal Requirements

a. Contents

- i. An executive summary of not more than one page
- ii. A general background of your organization including:
 1. Description of similar studies undertaken
 2. Location of consulting firm
 3. Samples of similar work completed in the last three years

4. Experience working with economic development agencies on site selection, site visit coaching, site audits, site identification, site readiness, workforce readiness, and industry competitiveness.
5. Familiarity with Queen Anne's County
- iii. Description of approach/methodology to the scope of services
- iv. A detailed timeline outlining how and when the study would be completed
- v. Plans for subcontracting, if applicable
- vi. Costs by work product and total cost
- vii. Signed Acknowledgement of RFP Terms and Conditions

F. Debarred, Suspended and Ineligible Contractors

The consultant certifies by submission of a proposal that it is not a debarred, suspended or ineligible contractor by any Agency of Federal or State government. No proposal received from a debarred, suspended or ineligible contractor will qualify for an award.

G. Acceptance of Consultant Proposals

The Queen Anne's County Commissioners reserve the right to reject any or all proposals, to waive any nonmaterial irregularities in the proposal, to accept or reject any item or combination of items and accept any proposal which best benefits the people of Queen Anne's County.

Queen Anne's County reserves the right to negotiate with any, none, or all of the proposing vendors.

H. Rating of Proposals

Each proposal will be rated and ranked in accordance with by following criteria:

- Approach for conducting the analysis
- Specific methodologies for completing various aspects of the study
- Demonstrated ability and capacity
- Technical qualifications of individuals assigned to the project
- Ability to meet the proposed timeline
- Total price of study

Queen Anne's County reserves the right to award a contract based solely on the proposals or to negotiate with one or more consultants. During the evaluation process, Queen Anne's County may request additional information or clarification from applicants. The selected consulting firm will be chosen on the basis that it is the best fit for the County, and may not necessarily be based on the lowest price. The chosen consultant must agree to execute a contract within 30 days after the Notice of Award.

No contract may be assigned, in whole or in part, without the prior approval of Queen Anne's County.

I. Contract Price and Payment

Queen Anne's County has secured \$30,000 in funding to support the cost of this study. Applicants are encouraged to apply for the amount needed to cover reasonable and necessary costs to complete the work. The proposal must state the total planned hours and hourly rate by staff classification of those anticipated to work on the project. An all-inclusive maximum fee for each work product, broken down by hourly rates must be provided, as well as an all-inclusive maximum fee for the entire study.

The price quoted in the proposal must be firm and not subject to change. The price shall represent the total cost to Queen Anne's County, including direct, indirect, and out-of-pocket expenses. Quoted costs should include, but not be limited to: meeting with County staff, stakeholder meetings, public hearings and presentation of final report.

Payment will be made upon approval of deliverables at 25% (upon execution of the agreement) and 50% (when study and recommendations have been drafted). The final 25% will be paid upon completion and approval of all deliverables.

IV. Timelines

A. RFP Timeline

June 26, 2023	Release of Request for Proposals
July 14, 2023	Letter of Intent to Apply Due
July 24, 2023	Deadline to Submit Questions
July 28, 2023	Q&A Will be Posted
August 11, 2023 @ 3:00 p.m.	RFP Responses due, Bid Opening

B. Project Timeline

Interim due dates are estimated and will be confirmed upon execution of contract. Applicants are required to develop a more comprehensive proposed timeline for completion of the project. All work products must be completed by January 12, 2024.

September/October 2023	Strategic Asset Evaluation
October/November 2023	Industry Competitiveness Analysis
December 2023/January 12, 2024	Final Deliverables and Presentation of Report and Analysis

V. Acknowledgement of RFP Terms and Conditions

The proposer, as part of its response, must submit this signed document by an authorized representative that obligates the proposer to perform the commitments contained in its response.

Acknowledged and Agreed:

Signature

Printed Name

Title

Company Name

City, State

Phone Number

Date

Signature

Printed Name

Title

Company Name

City, State

Phone Number

Date